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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR APRIL 7, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 07, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

HURRIYET / CUMHURIYET: During European Parliament's General Assembly meeting called "The situation in Southeastern Turkey", members stated that PKK was a terrorist organization. Speakers at the meeting reportedly made a call to Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir and DTP administration to condemn and exclude the PKK. Meanwhile, Cumhuriyet daily noted that European Parliament will urge Turkey in the National Program it prepared to set a particular timeframe to end economic and social imbalances in the southeastern Turkey. Cumhuriyet daily separately noted that the crisis between the U.S. and Turkey over the PKK issue has deepened.

HURRIYET / RADIKAL / CUMHURIYET: Funerals for five soldiers killed in Sirnak's Gabar Mountains, and one police officer killed in Bingol were held yesterday. Land Forces Commander Yasar Buyukanit and Jandarma Commander Fevzi Turkeri participated in one of the funerals held in Ankara's Haymana district.

HURRIYET: Songul Erol Abdil, Tunceli Mayor from DTP, together with the Tunceli Governor opened a memorial corner at the Security Directorate of the province to honor the memory of 45 police officers who died during the clashes with the terrorist organization. The opening also marks the 161st anniversary of foundation of the Turkish National Police.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir complained about being held as a defendant, when he was actually a victim and witness of (recent) incidents (of civil unrest in Diyarbakir). According to Baydemir, DTP provincial administrators and civil society member have worked very hard to keep the situation calm in the province; however, the recent arrests have left no one in the province that people would listen to and follow.

RADIKAL / ZAMAN / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM / CUMHURIYET: Four DTP Diyarbakir provincial administrators and two chairmen of union branches have been arraigned and arrested in Diyarbakir on charges that they have undertaken activities on behalf of the terrorist organization. Cumhuriyet daily noted that 27 people, most of whom were DTP members, were detained yesterday in the region.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Nine people, including two senior DTP members in Batman and unspecified number of children, have been arraigned at Batman's Duty Court and have been imprisoned on

charges of "being a member of terrorist organization" and "uprising against the state." Meanwhile, 10 detainees in Sanliurfa have been arraigned and imprisoned to stand trial later. DTP Ceylanpinar provincial chairperson and two district administrators are among those people imprisoned.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Mazlum-Der (Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People) representatives pointed out that 199 out of 551 people detained and 91 out of 375 people arrested during the incidents in Diyarbakir were children. According to Mazlum-Der, 95 per cent of the children have been tortured and badly treated.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Hakkari Prosecutor initiated an investigation against tradesmen of Hakkari's Semdinli district. Tradesmen have been giving their statements to the Prosecutor's Office starting as of April 5.

ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM: Diyarbakir Municipality held a "Dinner for Tolerance" for representatives of Chaldean, Syriac, Armenian, and Muslim communities. Zaman daily reported the event as Diyarbakir Mayor holding a dinner for leaders of assorted religious communities comprised mostly of Christians and especially to mark the coming of Easter.

RADIKAL / EVRENSEL: American New York Times newspaper covered an in-depth news article about the recent turmoil that has been going on in southeastern Turkey and said that the recent situation has been steering Kurds and Turkey back on a rocky path.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: The military operation Turkish Armed Forces launched in Siirt's Pervari district has been continuing for about a week. Recently, 20,000 soldiers have been deployed in the area and the extent of the operation has been widened by including village guards from the surrounding

ADANA 00000075 002 OF 002

villages to the operation.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: DTP Siirt Provincial Chairperson Murat Avci, who was summoned last week to the prosecutor's office and who provided a statement there, was arraigned, and released to stand trial later. Avci has been re-summoned to the Siirt Prosecutor's Office to give his statement once again.

EVRENSEL: Kutbettin Arzu, Chairman of Diyarbakir Chamber of Commerce and Industry, expressed his frustration over debates whether state of emergency rule be revoked in the region or not.

EVRENSEL: PM Erdogan, in response to DTP leaders' enquiry as to why he met with Hamas leaders, said that Hamas came to power as a result of democratic elections. PM Erdogan had earlier indicated that a meeting with DTP would only be possible if DTP recognized PKK as a terrorist organization. The daily pointed out that Halid Mesal, the political leader of Hamas, whom Turkey met with, was not an elected political figure.

OZGUR GUNDEM: DTP Kars provincial chairperson Mahmut Alinak filed a complaint with the European Court of Human Rights when a higher court overturned local Kars court's decision not to seize hand-outs that included the Kurdish letter "w." The handouts invited people to March 21 Newruz celebrations. As a result of higher court's decision, the hand-outs were seized.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The report of Human Rights Association (HRA) in Diyarbakir claimed that the level of violence has been intensified by security forces in the southeastern region following such announcements made by the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice and Minister of Interior as, "...we will take necessary measures whether they (demonstrators) be women or children."

ZAMAN: Zaman daily reported that the report of HRA in Diyarbakir included statements that blamed police for attacking

the demonstrators, smashing windows of businesses, and using intense force against demonstrators during the social turmoil in Diyarbakir. According to Zaman, HRA's report excluded such facts as demonstrators burning public buildings and doing great damage to them.

OZGUR GUNDEM: An Alawi federation board announced that the state was ignoring demands of the Alawis. Alawis, who have carried out a passive defense to date for their concerns, will start carrying out civil disobedience activities. Alawi children will reportedly boycott religious classes at schools, court actions will be demanded by masses for their complaints, and ceremonies held by the state will be protested.

RADIKAL / CUMHURIYET: An epidemic of mange hit Sirnak's Cizre district and 3000 students, especially primary school students, have been affected.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

CUMHURIYET: Gaziantep Provincial Jandarma Command seized fifty million synthetic Captagon pills in a yarn factory situated in the Organized Industrial Zone of Gaziantep.

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